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The Effect of the Fall of Jerusalem upon the Character of the Pharisees.

A Paper read before the Members of the Society for Hebraic Studies,

BY

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The Effect of the Fall of Jerusalem upon the Character of the Pharisees.

WHEN I was invited to lecture before the members of this Society, I was in doubt whether to accept or to decline. The invitation was an honour of which I was, and am, justly proud. To comply with it was to face an ordeal more formidable than any which I have had to meet for a very long time. What can I offer in the field of Hebraic studies which shall contain instruction for those who are masters in Israel? Probably very little. Yet even things familiar may have an interest when presented from a new point of view, or by one who has arrived at the knowledge of them by other than the accustomed paths. Therefore I shall pluck up my courage and put before you some of the results of such study as I have been able to make, in a region where I must grope my way while to you it is in a sense your mother country.

The subject of my paper is one which has long interested me and is also (partly for that reason) the only one on which I could write a paper in the very limited time which is all that I can now give to my own studies. It approaches very closely the ground covered by the opening address of the President of this Society, but it will hardly intrude upon that ground. I am greatly indebted to the kindness of the President for the opportunity to read his lecture again; and, while I profit by his learning, I shall avoid any repetition of what he said, as I shall have a different object in view. There is room for many scholars to work upon a period of such vital importance for Jewish history, as that which has for its central event the fall of Jerusalem, in the year 70 of the common era.

It would be utterly impossible to deal with all the aspects of that great disaster, or to trace out all its consequences, in a single lecture, even if I had the requisite knowledge. But it will, I hope, be possible, within the compass of a modest discourse, to consider the effect of the fall of Jerusalem upon the religious and moral character of the Pharisees. That is a more manageable subject, and one that has a certain interest of its own. For the Pharisees,

as everyone knows, are among the doubtful characters in history, those who justly or unjustly have got a bad name. So it has been from the days when Christianity began, and more especially, since Christianity wrote down its first impressions. And those who have tried to account for what they take to be the peculiar features of the Pharisaic character, have found part of the explanation in the effect produced by the fall of Jerusalem. Moreover, the Pharisees were the only survivors who maintained their existence as a religious community. That is perhaps not the right word to use; I mean that while other elements in Jewry were represented, after 70, by individuals, few or many, the Pharisees were a group, a society, a fraternity, conscious of corporate life, common ideals as well as common sorrows and sufferings. It was in virtue of this consciousness of more than individual life that the Pharisees were the one element in the nation through whom the life and thought of Israel were transmitted to later ages. Other elements in Jewry survived with difficulty or dwindled away; the line of descent from the Judaism of the first century to that of the present, came by way of the Pharisees. When the Temple was destroyed, the Sadducees, as a party or sect or body, necessarily passed away. Traces of Sadducean practice and belief can be found in the Rabbinical literature; and no doubt members of Sadducean families maintained in their own circles their hereditary modes of thought. But of any kind of Sadducean organization or corporate life after 70 there can be no question. In regard to other elements in Jewry,—Essenes, Apocalyptists, Amha-aretz,—it is not probable, at least there seems no reason to assert, that any sudden and decisive end came upon them when the Temple was destroyed. Either they continued to exist under the shelter of Pharisaism and found such utterance as they could through Pharisaic forms of speech, or else they drew away from the main body of Jewry to an obscure independence, or drifted off into Christianity or Gnosticism.

It is thus true to say that the Judaism which survived the fall of Jerusalem was in the main Pharisaism. The literature of the succeeding centuries is almost wholly Pharisaic, and in that literature the religious, moral and intellectual character of Pharisaism is depicted with equal clearness and honesty. One would think it would be safe to surmise that the Pharisees had not widely diverged from the main lines of their original type of

religious life and character, at any period since Pharisaism first appeared, because, the ground principle of Pharisaism was so sharply defined, its resultant consequences so clearly drawn, that no considerable change could take place in that life and character without the transformation of Pharisaism into something which could no longer be called by that name.

But it has been maintained by many scholars that Pharisaism did in fact change its character very considerably, and not only so, but that one such change was brought about by the fall of Jerusalem. It is not agreed whether the Pharisees were better or worse, morally, after 70 than they had been before. Some say that they were (on the evidence of the New Testament) very bad before 70, and that the great disaster administered to them a sort of tonic, which enabled them to recover their moral health, and become the more respectable people which it is generally admitted they did become. On the other hand it is maintained, and notably by Canon Charles, that the change produced in Pharisaism by the fall of Jerusalem was a change for the worse. Truly, a hard judgment if they were already as bad as they are represented in the New Testament,—a representation which Canon Charles would presumably admit as correct.

Canon Charles is a scholar whose words carry so much weight, that many who read them will take as sound and certain whatever he declares to be historical fact. It is the more important therefore to show that his theory about the degeneration of Pharisaism does not meet the case, does not fit in with the facts, and does not explain them at any period in the history of Pharisaism. It is this theory which I wish to examine, and in so doing to present what I hold to be the true, or at least the more nearly true, solution of the problem.

I will come straight to the point, and show what the problem is, by quoting some sentences by Canon Charles in which he puts forward his view that Pharisaism underwent a change for the worse after, and apparently in consequence of, the fall of Jerusalem.

In the preface to his edition of the Book of Enoch, published in 1912, he writes as follows:—" I cannot help expressing here my deep regret at the backwardness of Jewish scholars in recognizing the value of this literature (*i.e.* the Apocalyptic) for their own history. Apocalyptic is the true child of prophecy, and became its

true representative to the Jews from the unhappy moment when the Law won an absolute autocracy in Judaism, and made the utterance of God-sent prophetic men impossible, except through the medium of pseudepigraphs, some of which, like Daniel, gained an entrance, despite the Law, into the O. T. Canon.

"It is true that eminent Jewish scholars, in America and elsewhere, have in part recognised the value of Apocalyptic literature; but as a whole, orthodox Judaism still confesses and still champions the *one-sided Judaism which came into being after the fall of Jerusalem in* 70 A.D., *a Judaism lopped in the main of its spiritual and prophetic side, and given over all but wholly, to a legalistic conception of religion. It is not strange that since that disastrous period, Judaism became to a great extent a barren faith, and lost its leadership in the spiritual things of the world.*" *

Also, in Vol. II of the great Oxford edition of the Apocrypha, in the general Introduction (p. vii), Canon Charles writes: "Legalistic Pharisaism, in time, drove out almost wholly the Apocalyptic element as an active factor, though it accepted some of its developments, and became the parent of Talmudic Judaism; whereas, Apocalyptic Judaism developed more and more the Apocalyptic *i.e.*, the prophetic utterance, and in the process came to recognise, as in IV Ezra, the inadequacy of the Law for Salvation. From this it follows that the Judaism that survived the destruction of the Temple, being wholly bereft of the Apocalyptic wing which had passed over into Christianity, was not the same as the Judaism of an earlier date."

And finally, on page 690, of that same volume, in an editorial note after the Introduction to my translation of the Pirke Aboth, he says: "The student should bear in mind that Rabbinical Pharisaism after the destruction of the Temple in 70 A.D., differs largely from the Pharisaism before that date."

These quotations serve to express the deliberate and considered opinion of Canon Charles, viz., that a change for the worse came over the character of Judaism in general, and Pharisaism in particular after, and in consequence of, the fall of Jerusalem. We are clearly right in saying that the alleged change came about in consequence of the fall of Jerusalem, because it was that event which made the continued existence of the Sadducees an impos-

* Italics mine. R.T.H.

sibility. And when Canon Charles contends that the Judaism after 70 was spiritually poorer than the Judaism before 70, it is chiefly the presence or absence of Sadducees which make the difference.

Let us, however, examine, first of all, the passages I have just quoted from Dr. Charles, and try to form a clear notion of what they imply. In the preface to Enoch he speaks of an "unhappy moment when the Law won an absolute autocracy in Judaism, and made the utterances of God-sent prophetic men impossible, except through the medium of pseudepigraphs, some of which like Daniel, gained an entrance despite the Law, into the O.T. Canon." The period indicated in that very involved sentence is, of course, the period of, and after, Ezra. But it is surely a begging of the question to assert that the autocracy of the Law made impossible the utterance of God-sent prophetic men, except these pseudepigraphs. Since when, I would ask, have "God-sent prophetic men" waited for permission to say whatever they had got to say? Imagine Isaiah or Amos being compelled to disguise his message, or give it under an assumed name because the Law had become supreme and would not tolerate the free prophetic utterance. Isaiah could say sharp things about the sacrifices; he would have said equally sharp things about any other alleged divine institution which hindered him from speaking in the name of the Lord. So, if there had been any, in the period after Ezra, who had felt himself moved to speak or write as the pre-exilic prophets had done, he would have made himself heard, Law or no Law. But it is idle to talk of any such opposition. If there were no prophets after the ancient manner, in the times when the Law was supreme, there was no need of prophecy of that type, and there was need of men of the type who actually appeared, viz., the Sopherim. They were the lawful descendants of the prophets, even if they shared the inheritance with the Apocalyptists—of whom more presently. If the author of a pseudepigraph, like Daniel, chose to write in that particular style, the reason seems to be precisely that he had *not* got the ancient prophetic fervour, and could only gain a hearing by a literary artifice.

However, let us follow Dr. Charles a little further. Here was the Law, as he said, wielding an absolute autocracy in Judaism. If the effect was to make free prophetic utterances impossible, and

to that extent to sterilise the spiritual life, how came there to be any spiritual life left in the Judaism, so late as the year 70? We used to be taught that such a sterilisation did in fact take place, and that the very objectionable Pharisees portrayed in the New Testament are the proof of it. But that will not suit Dr. Charles, for he asks us to recognise that the Judaism before 70 was possessed of a considerable degree of spiritual vitality and energy. Where did all that come from, if the autocracy of the Law had really been so fatal to spiritual life as he said? He cannot have it both ways, and if he is to show some disastrous loss of religious efficiency after 70, he must admit that it was there before 70. If it had been present in the Judaism before Ezra, then the autocracy of the Law did not stamp it out. If it grew up in the time after Ezra, then what about the fatal influence of the Law?

So far, Dr. Charles' theory of the development of Judaism has not fared very well. By the time we get to the year 70, we have once more a change for the worse, and an even more remarkable one than that just criticised. The Judaism before 70 was enriched by the presence of various elements—Sadducees and Pharisees, Essenes, Apocalyptists, and many types for whom no special name is reserved. The Judaism which came into being after 70, was, says Dr. Charles, "*A Judaism lopped in the main of its spiritual and prophetic side, and given over all but wholly to a legalistic conception of religion. It is not strange that since that disastrous period Judaism became, to a great extent, a barren faith, and lost its leadership in the spiritual things of the world.*"

When Dr. Charles says that the spiritual and prophetical side was wanting in the post-70 Judaism, he means that the Apocalyptic element was gone, or at least, that it soon disappeared. As a matter of fact, the only element which had really vanished was Sadduceeism; and whatever strong points the Sadducees had, spiritual fervour is not usually reckoned amongst them. Spiritually, Judaism stood to gain rather than to lose, by the disappearance of the Sadducees. As for the Apocalyptists, whatever they had to contribute of spiritual value, was available for the Judaism after 70, as it had been for the Judaism before 70. It is true that the prevailing character of the later Judaism was what is called legalistic, and not Apocalyptic; but the Apocalyptic element did not wholly disappear for a long time. Whatever, therefore, may have been the character

of the pre-70 Judaism, its spiritual poverty after that date is less apparent than Dr. Charles makes out. And, if it was only after the year 70 that Judaism "lost its leadership in the spiritual things of the world," then presumably it still held that leadership down to the year 70, which is a rather surprising admission on the part of one who attaches to the events of the preceding half-century the importance which a Christian might be expected to attach to them. That is a side issue, into which I shall not enter on the present occasion.

Dr. Charles' main contention amounts to this: that Judaism was spiritually rich or poor according as the Apocalyptic element was or was not present as a main constituent of it. Apocalyptic came in, because the Law made prophecy impossible in any other form. And Apocalyptic went out, apparently because the Law proved too strong for it in the long run. But in any case, in the centuries during which Apocalyptic flourished, there was hope for Judaism; it was still spiritually alive. After Apocalyptic disappeared, then Judaism became spiritually dead. That is, as I understand it, Dr. Charles' interpretation of the history of Judaism before and after the year 70. It would be unjust to say that the whole theory is constructed in the interests of Apocalyptic, and to exalt that particular type of Jewish thought of which Dr. Charles is the chief exponent at the present day. But, if he knew the Rabbinical literature as he knows the very much more accessible and more easily managed Apocalyptic literature, he would not have put forward a theory so wide of the mark as I believe his to be. It is hardly indeed to be expected that anyone who can see in the Apocalyptic literature the splendid and wonderful qualities which Dr. Charles discerns there, should be able to read the deeper meaning of the Rabbinical literature, the Halachah which to the Gentile is a stumbling block, and the Haggadah which he deems to be foolishness. But until the Gentile (in this case, Dr. Charles and his school), does learn the secret of the Talmud and the Midrash, he will try in vain to solve the problem of the post-70 Judaism by the key of Apocalyptic alone. All he can discern is this, that after 70, the prevailing Judaism did not encourage the Apocalyptic type of teaching; it therefore gradually disappeared and went elsewhere, to people who could better appreciate its peculiar qualities, and who no doubt looked upon it with more favour because Judaism did not like it. But

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he can give no explanation of why Rabbinical Judaism disapproved of Apocalyptic, and why it devoted itself to Halachah and Haggadah. He believes that in his Apocalyptic writings, is to be found the only answer possible from the side of orthodox Judaism to the problem presented by the disaster of 70, considered as a divine appointment. He has no glimpse of the real answer which the Rabbis, from Johanan ben Zaccai onwards, gave to that problem, and which had in it a strength of faith and courage and even hope, that no Apocalyptic ever possessed.

We are thus brought to a point where Apocalyptic and Rabbinic Judaism are seen as in some sense opposed to each other; both are included within the range of Pharisaism, but they represent two types of character, and of these two types one gradually prevailed over the other. Both were present in the Pharisaism before 70, and the effect of the fall of Jerusalem was (if I understand it aright), to strengthen the one type and weaken the other. I do not mean that the fall of Jerusalem was ever felt to be other than a disaster and a grievous affliction by any Pharisee. I mean that in consequence of the fall of Jerusalem, the Pharisaism which developed the Halachah gradually found itself stronger, and was able to endure through the evil days, while the Pharisaism which clung to Apocalyptic gradually lost heart, and so far as Judaism was concerned, died away altogether. Both these types of Pharisaism had been present before the fall of Jerusalem, and had probably added their share to the strife and jealousy which rent the unhappy city into rival factions. It is a miserable picture which Josephus draws, of the state of things in Jerusalem, while the Romans were pressing on the siege. If only the rival parties could have made common cause against the enemy, instead of cutting one another's throats. One thing, however, is plain amidst much that is obscure. There was a large and influential party of what we should call " pacifists," who if they could have had their way would have endured the full weight of Roman oppression, rather than go to war. These pacifists probably included the majority of the Pharisees. Certainly the leading Pharisees of the time belonged to the peace party. But the war party while more varied in its composition, must have included some Pharisees—some who took the line which, sixty years later, Aqiba took in the war of Barcochba. They were entirely devoted to the main principle of Pharisaism, but did not find in

that principle a reason why they should refrain from fighting when the heathen threatened with destruction the chosen people. Pharisees of this type found themselves in alliance with the Zealots, who were not necessarily Pharisees at all. Other sections of the nation ranged themselves on one side or the other, but with them I have no present concern. I am dealing only with the two types of Pharisees involved in the war. They represented, as Schürer has pointed out somewhere, two different conceptions of the true function of Israel. On the one hand there was the view that the duty of Israel, (and of every Israelite) was simply to serve God by living in accordance with the Torah; fulfilling the divine precepts and "walking before the Lord with a perfect heart blameless." On the other hand there was the view that since Israel was the chosen people of God, there was a duty for Israel to do in regard to all the nations, and that it would be a betrayal of trust if Israel were to allow, without a struggle, the triumph of the heathen and their own defeat. With ideas of that kind they would take up arms, when the war broke out, and would perhaps expect, during the course of it, that some sudden divine intervention would give victory to Israel and hurl down the enemy to destruction. If Israel was indeed the chosen people, how could it be thought that God would abandon them in their deadly peril? On the other hand, the Pharisees of the pacifist type would see in the war only a grievous increase in an evil already great, an increase which could have been avoided, and could, even afterwards, be mitigated by humble submission to the will of God as expressed through the power of Rome. They would have no interest in prolonging the struggle, and no hope of success in doing so. They would not expect any divine intervention to secure victory for Israel, and probably their wish was that the war might be over as soon as possible.

Now of these two classes of Pharisees, the pacifist party is clearly identical with that which developed the Halachah, and Rabbinic Judaism generally. Of this, there can be no doubt. The other party, I suggest, is to be identified with the Apocalyptists. I mean that those who wrote the Apocalyptic books which have come down to us, held some such view of the function of Israel as I have suggested, and might be expected to take up arms rather than allow the sanctuary to be defiled. I do not know whether any actual Apocalyptic writer was amongst those who fought in the

last struggle of Jerusalem. I only mean that those of the Pharisees who did so, being in sympathy with the war party, were of the same circle or group or way of thinking as that to which the Apocalyptists belonged.

The story of the fall of Jerusalem is told in detail by Josephus ; and anyone who has studied the Rabbinical literature will know that while there are very many allusions to it, no connected and consistent history of the siege could possibly be made out from that literature. Of course, the men who created the Talmud and the Midrash were not primarily concerned to write history, and might on that ground be excused for not having left a detailed account of the siege. But there is a remarkable detachment in many of their utterances, as if they were by no means so closely concerned as to be unable to judge fairly of what had taken place. There are countless expressions of grief and dismay at the destruction of the Temple and the capture of the city. But there are also admissions that the Temple had been already profaned by worldly and wicked men, and that the city had become no fit place for a holy people. It might even be that God Himself had given the city and the Temple over to the spoiler, because they had ceased to be needful for His purposes towards Israel. The Pharisees of the Rabbinic type were not so crushed down by the disaster but that they could see a meaning in it which was not without its lesson of hope. To write history was still less the purpose of the Apocalyptists than it was of the Rabbis. The allusions in the Apocalypses to the siege of Jerusalem, or to current events generally, are less frequent and less detailed than the anecdotes of the Midrash. Both literatures were the work of men who felt too deeply the spiritual burden laid upon the heart and soul of Israel, to have much concern for the historical description of it. And both literatures are the expression of the way in which that spiritual burden was variously apprehended, and of the means by which the several writers taught their countrymen to bear it.

Israel, the chosen people of God, crushed beneath the power of the triumphant Roman, her capital city taken, all her political eminence gone, having no longer a Temple or its duly performed sacrifices,—Israel flung into the dust of utter humiliation, exposed in the person of her people to every kind of suffering, while Israel's God was silent and made no sign—that was the stupendous fact

to which in some way Israel had to adjust itself. In the answer given by Apocalyptists and Rabbinists respectively to this great problem is expressed the effect of the fall of Jerusalem upon the religious life and thought of the Pharisees; and I shall spend the remainder of the time in developing the two answers. I will take first the Apocalyptic answer, partly because it is alleged by Dr. Charles that this was the only answer (other than mere sullen silence) which Pharisaism was able to make; and partly because I hold it to be the less important answer, and I wish to end, if I may put it so, on the major chord of the Talmud rather than on the minor chord of the Apocalypse.

Of the Apocalyptic writings, the one which is especially important for the present purpose is that known as IV Ezra, with which may be included the Apocalypse of Baruch. These were written not more than a generation after 70, and IV Ezra avowedly deals with the religious problems created by the fall of Jerusalem. Dr. Charles holds that the writer recognised the inadequacy of the Law for salvation. I doubt if the writer himself would accept that interpretation of his words: but he certainly showed that he had not found a solution of his problems, either in the Law or anywhere else. He beheld Israel to whom had been given the Law, despised and rejected, while the heathen whose sins were far greater were allowed to go scot free. "How does it profit us," he says (vii. 117) "that in the present we must live in grief and after death look for punishment?....How does it profit us that the eternal age is promised to us, whereas we have done the works that bring death? And that there is foretold to us an imperishable hope, whereas we are so miserably brought to futility? And that there are reserved habitations of health and safety, whereas we have lived wickedly? And that the glory of the Most High is to defend them that have led a pure life, whereas we have walked in ways most wicked? And that Paradise, whose fruit endures incorruptible, wherein is delight and healing, shall be made manifest, but we cannot enter it because we have passed our lives in unseemly ways....For while we lived and committed iniquity, we considered not what we were destined to suffer after death."

The writer is told by the angel who is justifying to him the ways of God, that "such is the condition of the contest which every man who is born upon earth must wage; that, if he be

overcome, he shall suffer as *thou* hast said ; and if he be victorious he shall receive what *I* have said."

The writer has little to say by way of consolation or encouragement. He makes Ezra challenge the divine justice and mercy, as seen in the fate of Israel, only to be told that the Most High cares but for the few righteous who will finally enjoy the bliss of the world to come, and that He takes no account of the many sinners who will perish. For those who suffer, as all Israel was suffering, there was no alleviation except the prospect of the world to come, and Ezra might well ask : " How long shall all this endure ? "

IV Ezra is a mournful book, as indeed it could hardly fail to be, if its author was taken up with the sufferings of Israel and the attempt to penetrate into the mystery of God's dealing with His people. But I can find in it little or no trace of the prophetic spirit such as had glowed in the prophets of the olden time. The elaborate and artificial symbolism is a poor substitute for the vivid poetic imagery of the earlier prophets ; and if I am reminded that the beginning of the Apocalyptic manner may be traced even in the earlier prophets, I agree, and say that it marked the first symptom of the decline of prophecy. The extravagance with which such symbolism is applied by the Apocalyptists is one cause that makes them (or so I find), tedious and tawdry. IV Ezra is perhaps one of the best specimens, but even IV Ezra appears to me to have very little in it that can be called original or great. The writer did not carry his problem to any higher stage than that on which he found it. If he is not to be called a pessimist he has no message of hope. No ray of divine light shines in upon the gross darkness of the world, except to show how great is the darkness and how far off and unapproachable the upper region of the heavenly light. As a cry of despair, there is a certain gloomy splendour about this Apocalypse ; and it could not be denied a high place among the literature of its time. But despair goes hand-in-hand with death. And if Israel had nothing else to say, and nothing better to say, than is put by this writer into the mouths of Ezra and the Angel, and taught in the visions of the Eagle and the heavenly Jerusalem and the rest, then Israel would have died and not lived. There would have been an end of the nation which had suffered so much, and its place in the world would have been left vacant. Apocalypse, wherever it is found, is a symptom of weakness and not of strength ;

it is the work of writers whose minds were morbidly overstrained, under the pressure of calamity or the burden of the world's evil. And while we may well feel profound pity for, and sympathy with, the sufferers in such grievous times, we should not be blinded to the fact that these are they who were beaten or nearly beaten in the strife, and that there were others who did not lose hope and who were not beaten; men who bore, as the Apocalyptists bore, the very worst that fate could do to them, and who yet stood firm themselves and helped their fellow-men to stand firm, who wrung out of the sufferings of their time a lesson of trust in God, which has never been more heroically taught and never more faithfully learned and practised. The Apocalyptists could only beat against a closed door, in the vain hope that some day it might be opened. They could see no way out of the evil state in which they were, no way of deliverance for the oppressed souls any more than for the suffering bodies of their people. They had therefore to give place to others who could discern more clearly the needs of the time, and who could offer counsel and help instead of mere " mourning, lamentation and woe." The Apocalyptists did not give the only answer, still less the best answer, that was possible to Pharisaism,—as Dr. Charles asserts. They gave no doubt the only answer they could. But is it wonderful that the Pharisees of the Rabbinic type, those who produced in course of time the Talmud and the Midrash, should have looked with disapproval upon the Apocalyptic style of literature? That they should have allowed to the Apocalyptic writers no place in their own literature? There are indeed in the Rabbinic literature occasional passages of Apocalyptic matter; but nothing that can be put in comparison with the elaborate books usually known as Apocalypses. So many and so various are the things that can be found in the Rabbinic literature that it would be strange if Apocalyptic had left no trace there. But it is beyond question that the whole nature and spirit of the Rabbinic literature is alien from the Apocalyptic, and the two could not, and certainly did not, flourish together. Apocalyptic found no welcome from the Rabbis. They would have none of it. They would not have the sorely-tried spirits of their brethren depressed and weakened by the hopeless lamentations and troubled dreams of IV Ezra and his kind. So Apocalyptic was left to carry its wares to some other market—Christian, Gnostic, or what not And as an element in Judaism it

gradually ceased to exist. Dr.Charles and his followers may lament its disappearance and regret that Jewish scholars should so seldom and so slightly have recognised its importance for their own history ; that they should have disregarded what was a true daughter of prophecy and have championed almost exclusively the one sided Judaism of the Talmud. May we not say that the Rabbis of the times after the fall of Jerusalem knew what they were about in rejecting Apocalypse and devoting themselves to Halachah and Haggadah ? And that Jewish scholars in our own day who have thought but little of Apocalypse and much of the Talmud as expressions of the true spirit of Israel, have judged more truly than Dr. Charles, which of the two really was of the essence of Judaism.

I have then, finally, to present the true answer made by Pharisaism to the problem created by the fall of Jerusalem, the effect produced by that crushing disaster upon the religious thought and life of the Pharisees. I remind you of what is of course well known to every scholar who has studied the Rabbinic literature of the period but it is none the less deserving of remark : I mean the extraordinary ease and rapidity with which (as it would seem) the religious system of the Pharisees was adjusted to the changed conditions. Johanan ben Zaccai, the spiritual leader of the Pharisees, obtained from Vespasian, the town of Jabneh " with its wise men," and permission to teach there. He transferred to Jabneh all that could be transferred of the prestige of Jerusalem in regard to religion and the arrangements of social life. He gathered round him all the teachers and scholars of the time, and, in conjunction with them, worked for the preservation of the higher life of Israel.

The fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the Temple was an event which no Jew could behold unmoved. The city had been the centre of the national existence, and the Temple the most venerated symbol of its religious life. Grievous indeed must have been the sight of their destruction. Johanan ben Zaccai, we are told, used to go forth from Jabneh, and look towards Jerusalem when he knew that the end was drawing near ; and when he heard at last that the Temple was burnt he rent his clothes and mourned over it. His grief finds numberless echoes in the literature. The story of the siege of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar was told over again, with all manner of haggadic additions, and told with evident reference to the siege and capture by Titus. The Canonical book of

Lamentations formed the basis of the Midrash *Echah Rabbathi*, in which Israel's grief and sorrow, the pathos and tragedy of her last and greatest affliction were poured forth by hundreds of writers in endless variety of tone. And all, with covert reference to the events of the year 70 and not to the ancient times of Nebuchadnezzar. Indeed it may be truly said, I believe, that the theme of the חורבן הבית, in one or other of its aspects, is present in some degree in all the Midrashim, unless perhaps the halachic ones. All this may be taken for granted. I mean that the fate of Jerusalem and the Temple was a source of very deep grief to every Jew, and not least to the Pharisees. But in other respects it made less difference to the Pharisees than to any other class of the community. For, ever since the days of Ezra, they had been learning (whether they had realized it or not) to make their religion independent of the Temple and its services. The Pharisees as a class had had but little share in the management and conduct of the Temple system, though the ritual was performed in accordance with their views. But the real centre of their religious life was in the Synagogue and the School—not in the Temple. They had developed a form of religion which could be independent of any local sanctuary, any outward ritual, and any official priesthood ; a form of religion which laid the chief stress not upon the " outward and visible sign," but upon the " inward and spiritual grace." To them, therefore, it was not a fatal blow to their religion when the Temple was burnt. Beyond the grief which it caused, it hardly affected at all their religion or their life generally. Whether they ever got so far as to realize that they were spiritually better *without* the Temple than *with* it, I do know, but it is certain that they were not thrown into confusion as if there were an end to their religion. When Johanan ben Zaccai was asked what was there to make atonement now that the Temple was destroyed, and what could take the place of the sacrifices, he replied in the well known answer that prayer and charity would henceforth take the place of the Temple ritual. A noble answer, and conveying a thought which perhaps no one till then had consciously formulated. But it was only putting into words what had been the unspoken principle underlying the teaching and religious life of the Pharisees, and indeed of all Israel outside of and apart from the Temple. When once Johanan ben Zaccai had declared, in that answer, the future policy for Israel, it seems to have been

accepted immediately without challenge by the rank and file who looked to him as their leader. There has not in fact been, so far as I know, any inclination to dispute the validity of that declaration ; and, if the Temple with its ritual were at some future time to be restored, Israel could not now disown the noble religion which has been her inspiration, her refuge and strength in all the centuries since the Temple fell.

The first effect then, or one main effect, of the destruction of Jerusalem upon the religious nature and life of the Pharisees was to teach them by practical experience and no longer by theory alone, that religion was not bound up with any outward condition of place, or time, or person, or ritual. And in this, there would be no difference between Apocalyptists and Rabbinists. At least, I do not know if the Apocalyptists expressed any other view than this which I have ascribed to all Pharisees, as to the loss of the Temple.

But what had the Rabbis to say upon the problem which so sorely perplexed the Apocalyptists ? The question how the great disaster to Israel was to be reconciled with faith in God ? And what had they further to say about the task which awaited Israel in the future ? They had one answer which met both those questions, and that was the study and practice of the Torah. As a reply to the question of the Apocalyptists ' How was the fate of Israel to be reconciled with faith in the God of Israel,' they took the ground that the ways of God were unsearchable ; they did not know why it had pleased Him so to deal with the people who had certainly tried to serve him. Something might be discerned, from pondering on the past sins of Israel, and especially the wickedness of her rulers and the chief priests in the later times. But when all was taken into account, it remained a mystery which they could not penetrate. They could see, however, in the teaching of the Apocalyptists, how speculation of that kind led to despair, and only weakened instead of strengthening those who indulged in it. And so far as I know, the Rabbis did not in the early centuries after the fall of Jerusalem ever attempt to give (as the Apocalyptists had given) a positive answer, in terms of the Divine Providence, to the question raised by the fate of Israel. They were as well able to deal with it as the writer of IV Ezra or any of his fellows. But they would not. They said in effect (I do not know if they ever said in so many words) :— " We do not know why all this has been sent upon Israel. We do

not seek to know. For us it is enough to say as Job said, '*Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him.*' "

By itself, that severe and sublime martyrdom of faith would not have sufficed to keep Israel alive. No nation and no individual could have endured for long bearing such a burden upon his heart and mind with no release from the strain, and the Rabbis found what they needed for their own well-being and that of their countrymen in devotion to the Torah. The position they took was this :— " Here are we, the remnant of Israel in sore distress,— exposed to all ravages of war, poverty, misery, suffering. When it will end, or how it will end, and why it has come about, we do not know. Doubtless, God will put an end to it in His own good time. But meanwhile His Will is to be done. He has given us the Torah, the written and unwritten revelation bestowed on Israel, offered indeed, to all nations, but accepted only by Israel. Our task is to learn His Will and do it in this present time; that is the one thing which cannot fail us. The Torah is our " stronghold, firm and sure." To ponder the Divine revelation given to us in the Torah, is to find what will strengthen our faith, renew our hope, and to put into the acts of life what we learn in the Torah, is the duty which is for the present time required of us." So I interpret the fact that the strength of Israel in the centuries immediately following on the year 70, was spent on building up the great fabric of the Talmud and the Midrash, a literature like no other that the world has even seen. Of course I know that the study of Torah was far older than the year 70, and that in its Rabbinical form it started with the work of the Sopherim. But it is none the less true that the greater part of the work was done after the year 70, and began immediately after that year. We read, indeed, of the Beth Shammai, and the Beth Hillel, about the beginning of the common era, and are given to understand that these rival schools debated much concerning the interpretation of Torah. But how little of what has come down to us, can be be definitely ascribed even to Hillel, whose name stands so high, and whose influence was doubtless so great. How much less can be traced to Shammai, or even to their followers as such ? But when Johanan ben Zaccai began to teach in Jabneh, he continued, perhaps, what he had done before, but it now had a different significance and a different effect. The

assembly at Jabneh, as later that at Usha and that in Tiberias, built up by patient labour and sheer hard-thinking, a great fabric of positive precept, intended to declare the will of God (as revealed in the Torah) upon every occasion and detail of life. It is no accidental coincidence that this detailed study of Torah, with this result, began immediately after the fall of Jerusalem, and still less was it a poverty of soul which led Israel's teachers to devote themselves at that time especially to the minute and detailed study of the Torah. It was a faith strong enough to reject the dismal wailing of the Apocalyptists and to choose the harder task of serving God to the uttermost, with heart and soul and strength. And there must have been some relief for sad hearts and sorely tried faith, in that strict attention to minute details of Halachah which has so often provoked the jeers of the ignorant Gentile, and which can even now move a man (who ought to have known better) to lament that the Pharisees should have given themselves over all but wholly to a legalistic conception of religion. This is not true, because side by side with the Halachah there is Haggadah ; strict precept is accompanied by appeals to the heart and the imagination. But even if the Halachah had been the only product of the Pharisaic genius in the sad years after the fall of Jerusalem, that would have been no ground for charging Israel with default from a high ideal. And by the time that the visions of the Apocalyptists had faded away, and their dismal laments had sunk into silence, there was given to Israel the Mishnah, as the fruit of the toil of her wise men in their schools, the piety of her teachers; the Mishnah, a book rugged and severe like a granite block, and fit to serve as the corner-stone of that "Temple not made with hands," which enshrined the religion of Israel and kept it safe through the centuries.

But Halachah was not the only object to which Pharisaic zeal was devoted. While the Rabbis rightly held that the supreme need of the time was to be met by study of the Torah, and practice of its precepts, they knew that there were other forms in which the revealed teaching of God could be, and needed to be, brought home to the mind and heart of His people, besides the discipline of strict commandment.

In the Haggadah they developed the more emotional side of the Torah, and by allegory and parable, by play of imagination, by

humour and pathos, by every kind of mental gift that could be made to serve the purpose of edification, they sought to teach, to help, to comfort, to encourage, to do everything for the spiritual welfare of their countrymen that religious leaders and guides could do.

There is in the Haggadah as much weird fantasy as there is in any Apocalypse, and there is none of the morbid brooding that borders on despair. There is nothing morbid about the Haggadah. In form, it differs widely from the Apocalyptic vision, yet the difference may not be so wide as appears at first sight. It may be that the Haggadah sprang from the same mental source as the fantastic imagery of the Apocalypse, but that it is treated differently, because the object was different, and the spiritual outlook of its authors was different. Apocalypse always tends to pessimism. Haggadah is always optimist, if it be optimism that keeps fast hold of trust in God whatever happens.

I do not illustrate all this. I am only concerned to bring out as clearly as I can, what I believe to be the true interpretation of the developments of Pharisaism and Judaism, after the fall of Jerusalem. It is far indeed from the truth to say that Pharisaism declined in spiritual power, became after 70, a poorer and weaker thing, because it set its face against the Apocalyptic teaching, and gave its whole strength to the learning of God's truth and the doing of His will. Israel learned from her wise men to bear patiently the hard blows which fell upon her, the age-long burden of sorrow and suffering which was her appointed lot. She learned from them to keep with unconquerable firmness, her trust in God. She cared not that her ways made her the object of Gentile contempt and mockery. If they liked to scoff, let them scoff. She had her heavenly gift of the Torah, committed to her, and she found rest unto her soul in studying, and ever studying, what God had given her, learning day by day and year by year, more diligently to fulfil His commands, and delighting no less to meditate upon His other teaching, to see visions and dream dreams of holy things such as no Apocalyptist ever would understand or care for. So Israel was helped to survive the great shock which was inflicted by the fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the Temple, and the later calamity which completed the ruin in 135. By methods which few but her own people have ever known, and still fewer have understood, her wise men—they rather than the Apocalyptists the true successors

of the prophets of the olden time, and working in the same spirit though in different ways,—saved the life of Israel as a religious organization, a factor in the development of the higher life of humanity, which humanity could never do without. And whatever may have been the condition of the Jewish people in the times before the fall of Jerusalem and the loss of the Temple, the effect produced by that event upon that Pharisaism which was the chief, if not the only survivor, was to raise higher the courage, and make stronger the faith of the martyr-nation of the world. To those who then suffered and endured, who were " smitten down but not destroyed " who served God in their daily toil, and learned of His will in the time that remained to them, to those Pharisees who have never been allowed to shake off the ill name that has clung to them through the centuries, to them it is due that Israel has survived and has brought down from out the past the treasure committed to her, and that Israel still lives to fulfil whatever task may be, in time to come, allotted to her in the inscrutable providence of God.

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